

Private vs Government Schooling in Assam: A Comparative Review Analysis

Ruhul Amin¹, Anupriya Saikia², Priyanka Devi³, Jesmin Sultana⁴

¹Assistant professor, Dept. of Education, Govt. Model Degree College, Baghbar, Barpeta, Assam.

Email: ruhulamm92@gmail.com

²Assistant Professor, Dept. of Education, Pragjyotish College, Guwahati, Assam

³Assistant Professor in Education, Deomornoi B.Ed. College, Deomornoi, Darrang Assam

⁴Assistant Professor, Dept. of Education, Hari Gayatri Das College, Azara, Guwahati, Assam

Abstract:

Indian education system is based on two unbalanced but connected pillars, i.e. private and government schooling, creating different access, quality and equity in different ways. The development of the private schools in the Assam - a rural based state characterized by urban rural division, tea-garden communities, riverine and flood areas, and language diversity, brings about critical questions regarding the learning environments and performance of the students. The paper is a comparative review of the private and government schooling in Assam based on secondary data comprising of ASER reports, UDISE+ statistics, research studies and state documents. It looks into inequality in infrastructure, teacher distribution, enrolment patterns, learning levels and socio-economic implications. It has been demonstrated that, in general, the infrastructure of the private schools is more advanced, classes are smaller, and the academic performance is comparatively stronger, whereas government schools are central to the given universal access, including almost all children with economically and socially disadvantaged backgrounds. According to ASER 2022 and ASER 2024, 98-99% of Assam children are in school aged 6-14, approximately 70% are in government schools and 28-30% in private schools. The article postulates that even with the large enrolment, the quality gaps are still there and it supports social stratification. It recommends the empowerment of government schools, control of the private ones, and the unification of the two as a combined effort to promote equal and quality education to all children in Assam.

Keywords: Private Schooling, Government Schooling, Assam, School Quality, Educational Equity.

1. Introduction and Theoretical Background:

1.1 Introduction:

It is well known that education is a fundamental catalyst to human development, social mobility and economic growth. In India, the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act passed on the year 2009 (RTE) has ensured free elementary education to every child of the age 6-14 years and most of these are provided by government schools. Concurrently, there has been a high rate of growth in the number of private schools both recognised and unrecognised in the past twenty years especially in urban and peri-urban regions.

Assam is a multidimensional educational area that is in the North-Eastern part. A large proportion of its population is found in rural and flood prone regions, tea garden labour lines and char (riverine) regions. It is also highly diverse in terms of socio-cultural aspects and minorities in Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes, religious and linguistic minorities. The provider of schools is mainly the government schools including the provincialized schools, but there has been an increase of privately-provided schools particularly in the towns and new urban centres which are often English-language schools.

The 2022 and 2024 rural reports of ASER indicate that the age 6-14 school enrolment in Assam is at above 98-99, which means that participation is almost universal. In 2018, Government school participation in this age group has a value of approximately 71.7% and in 2022 and 2024, the figures are 71.9% and 69.9% respectively with the rest mainly in the form of the private schools and a very small percentage in the other classification. This is indicative of the still existing government school domination as well as a non-trivial existence of non-state schools in the state.

1.2 Private and Government Schools: Conceptual Overview:

Assam has government schools, both states run and provincialized, in which education is free and accompanied by schemes like PM POSHAN (mid-day meals), free textbooks and uniform. The fees are paid in private schools, which differ in quality and ethos, and tend to have an English-media and modern or even elite image.

The government-private difference is not merely institutional but it goes deep into the perceptions of the parents, social aspirations and opportunity structures. Even in cases where evidence is questionable, families tend to consider private schools as being of better quality and being more socially prestigious. Government schools are generally viewed as cheap, inclusive and occasionally low-quality places, particularly on the accounts of urban elites.

1.3 Theoretical Framework:

Theoretical strands which are used to interpret the difference between a private and government schooling include several:

- i. **Human Capital Theory:** According to Human capital theory, education increases the productivity and income of individuals; therefore, families decide on whether to make schooling decisions to optimise the expected returns. The more endowed private schools can be considered high-paying investments, especially in areas where English-speaking education is appreciated.
- ii. **Institutional and School Choice Theories:** Institutional theories focus on the effects of norms, policies and organisational practices on the schooling field. Perceived quality, peer effects, distance, language, fee structure and social networks are among the several factors of school choice theory that are taken into consideration by parents. Medium of instruction, discipline and results of exams are some of the ways that the private schools in Assam distinguish themselves.
- iii. **Capability Approach and Equity:** The capability approach developed by Sen emphasizes the fact that education ought to increase real freedoms and capabilities of

people. According to (ResearchGate) a system where education is high quality exclusively to anyone who can afford fees and under communicates government schools runs the risk of reinforcing inequality instead of increasing the possibilities of everyone.

Within this framework, the comparison of the performance between the private and the government schools in Assam is not only in terms of relative performance but in terms of the impact that the dual system has on equity, opportunity and social justice.

2. Review of Literature:

The works and material below are particularly pertinent to a comparative analysis of the private and government schooling in Assam and in India in general.

Borah (2023) *Comparative Analysis of Government and Private Schools (Dhakuakhana, Lakhimpur District)*. A descriptive survey was used to compare the academic performance of 706 students in the government and private schools of Dhakuakhana subdivision of Lakhimpur district, Assam. It has determined that the students of the private schools performed much better on academic achievement tests than the students of the government schools but this was influenced by the parental education level and the home environment. (ilkogretim-online.org)

Baruah et al. (2022) *Comparative Analysis of Government and Private Schools at Elementary Level (Dibrugarh District)*. In this paper, elementary schools in two blocks of Dibrugarh district were studied and compared in terms of status, basic infrastructural facilities, teaching strategies, co-curricular activities and availability of resources. The infrastructure of private schools was superior, there were more co-curricular activities and other staff (music, sport teachers, computer teachers) whilst government schools had basic amenities such as toilets and drinking water but could not provide enriched learning resources and facilities. ([Positive Psychology Journal](http://PositivePsychologyJournal.com))

Choudhury (2023) *A Comparative Analysis of Government and Private Schools in Barak Valley*. The paper has examined quality, access and socio-economic implications of government and private schools in the Barak Valley region. It emphasized that it was seen that the teaching in the private schools was better, there was better discipline and English-medium instruction, yet it was not as available to poorer rural families since they saw it as expensive and had it concentrated in towns. State schools were geographically closer and less limited by resource disparities and overcrowded classrooms. ([Int. J. of Research in Academic World](http://Int.J.ofResearchinAcademicWorld.com))

Mahanta, Gupta (2019) *Unequal Schools as Source of Unequal Society (Higher Secondary in Guwahati)*. This sociological research paper discussed government and privately-owned higher secondary schools in the city of Guwahati and presented that the inequality in infrastructure, quality of teachers and school culture are contributing factors to disparate educational experiences and, therefore, disparate life opportunities. It highlighted the role of school type in reproduction of socio-economic stratification. ([ResearchGate](http://ResearchGate.net))

National Comparative Studies on Public vs Private Schools. The all-India reviews, such as the analysis of data on ASER has implied that in the basic reading and counting, the students in private schools tend to perform better, although the differences can be partly attributed to

the socio-economic discrimination: the students in the private school tend to have more privileged families. Annual status of education report (ASER) 2010. According to the recent national results of the ASER 2024, the government schools have demonstrated positive post-pandemic progress in the areas of foundational learning, eliminating the disparities with the private schools. ([ASER: Annual Status of Education Report](#))

Assam-Specific Schooling Scenario, ASER 2022 on Assam and media overviews (e.g. Sentinel Assam) illustrate a moderate situation: overall enrolment is high (98.7% 6-14), government school enrolment is rising, and learning performances are mixed, with issues in both reading and arithmetic performance in the two sectors. According to (The Sentinel) ASER 2024, in rural Assam, 69.9 percent of children aged 6-14 years are enrolled in government schools and 28.4 percent are enrolled in private schools. (Scribd)

Together these studies imply that there is a tendency towards benefits in infrastructure and staffing and measured learning outcomes in the private schools and a still important role of the government schools as the principal provider of schooling among the poor and the rural populations. The literature is, however, decentralized across the districts and levels; a synthesis based comparative analysis of Assam at the state level using various secondary sources is still required- this paper is trying to fill in that gap.

3. Research Objectives:

This research work is informed by two brief goals:

- i. To compare key schooling indicators between government and private schools in Assam.
- ii. To examine the equity and socio-economic implications of school-type differences for marginalised learners.

4. Research Methodology:

This study will be descriptive and analyzing research design which will solely use secondary data. There were no major field-work or independent surveys done, the research was a synthesis of evidence available on various trustworthy sources to make comparison of private and government schools in Assam. The data is mostly based on ASER 2018, 2022 and 2024 state-level reports, which offer data on the enrolment distribution both by school type and basic learning indicators with additional support of media summaries of such sources as The Sentinel and other education reports on Assam. The evidence base is further supported by empirical research that compares the types of schools in Assam (e.g., Borah, 2023; Baruah et al., 2022; Choudhury, 2023; Mahanta and Gupta, 2019) and also by national studies of the inequality in schooling. The analysis will require two key stages: the descriptive comparison of enrolment patterns, facilities, teacher contributions and learning outcomes; and thematic synthesis of qualitative data regarding the parental choice, access and equity implication, which will allow interpreting the data through the goals of the study.

4.4 Limitations:

- In the public documents, disaggregated, state-level data by type of school on learning outcomes in Assam is scarce; sometimes analysis has been based on national trends to gain insights into state-level trends.
- The available comparative studies are focused on specific districts (e.g., Dibrugarh, Lakhimpur, Barak Valley, Guwahati), and might not be a complete representation of the state.
- Causality cannot be made; results are correlational and interpretive and not causal estimates of the effect of school type.

5. Discussion & Results:

5.1 Objective 1: Comparison of Government and Private Schooling in Assam:

The comparative study between government and private schools in Assam shows the multidimensional variation based on infrastructure, teacher capacity, school culture, parental perceptions, medium of instruction and socio-economic selectivity. Instead of considering two systems as being superior and inferior, one must comprehend the functioning of the two system in different socio-economic and policy contexts. The higher-quality and English-medium schools, which are mainly located in urban and semi-urban clusters, are the private schools, and the government schools are the rest of the school system, which covers the rural and marginalised regions. According to secondary information, in many instances, despite the fact that the performance of private schools in quantifiable academic achievement is higher, most of the variance occurs between income differences, parental literacy, access to tutoring and learning facilities as opposed to the type of school. Therefore, the discussion should not be limited to simplistic comparisons but should explore the role of school characteristics in determining the opportunities of learning and equity.

5.1.1 Enrolment Patterns by School Type:

The enrolment patterns in Assam reveal that the government and private schools equally (but unequally) contribute to the education system. ASER 2022 and 2024 rural results indicate almost universal enrolment of the 6-14 age group which is over 98 but the distribution between school types continues to be socio-economically stratified. Most rural children, particularly of lower-income, tribal, tea-garden and minority backgrounds are taught in government schools, with accession to a private school being more typical of urban families, more financially and culturally endowed households. Such trends indicate that the choice of school in Assam is not an indifferent one, but rather heavily influenced by the cost, availability, linguistic interests and perceived quality.

Evidence collected in the ASER reports in Assam shows that approximately 70 percent of the children in the rural areas are still in government schools, with about 28-30 percent of these in the private schools. During the last ten years, the central role of government schooling has not been replaced by the share of the private sector, although its share has been slowly rising. There are three patterns of analysis:

1. Cost and Economic Segmentation:

Government education is the back-up program to families with limited financial resources, which is provided with PM POSHAN (mid-day meals), free textbooks and uniforms. The private schools need fees, transportation and other educational costs, which makes them a feasible option to be considered by the more affluent families. Therefore, the type of school is closely associated with the economic class, which supports but does not cancel the educational opportunities based on income.

2. Language and status Aspirations:

The English-medium instruction in the private schools is also a strong incentive of the school preference of parents that always correlates with the employment and social opinion. Assamese or regional languages are mostly used in government schools, but English is making inroads into high classes. Therefore, the symbolic value of private schooling, which cannot be measured in any quality difference, has an influence on enrolment decisions.

3. Geographic and Access Control:

The urban-based nature of the private schools is very heavy with a small population in the char villages, tea-garden labour lines and flood-prone areas. State schools, however, will cover the territory and provide the only possible source of schooling in most of the under-served locations. The socio-economic stratification of school choice is thus enhanced by access.

Altogether, the trend of enrolment shows not only educational tastes but also more systematic inequalities. The increased private sector indicates the parental needs of the perceived quality but the state apparatus cannot be ignored in attaining equity and universal schooling. There is therefore need to strengthen the quality of the schools offered in government so that the outcome of learning of children is not reliant on their purchasing powers.

Table 1. Enrolment of Children Aged 6–14 by School Type in Rural Assam (Selected Years)

School Type	Approx. Share of Students	Key Determinants of Enrolment
Government Schools	~ 70%	Cost-free, accessibility, welfare schemes, rural concentration
Private Schools	~ 28-30%	Fee affordability, English-medium preference, perceived quality, urban concentration
Other Schools (Madrasas, etc.)	< 1-2%	Religious, cultural and local factors

Source: ASER Centre (2024). Annual Status of Education Report 2024: India rural and state reports (Assam rural state sheet).

Table 1 indicates that:

- In rural Assam, government schools still provide services to approximately 70 percent of children between the age range of 6-14.
- The enrolment at the private schools is substantial but with a lower percentage (approximately 28-30%), and a slight growth is anticipated between the year 2018 and 2024.
- Other schools such- madrassa, maktab, Tol etc. are enrolled in about 1-2%.
- The rate of non-enrolment among children is extremely minimal (approximately 1% in 2024).

This means that state schools are still the main institutions of mandatory education, especially in rural and poorer settings, and the number of students attending private schools is growing, with families having the capability and willingness to pay school fees.

5.1.2 Infrastructure and School Resources:

In Dibrugarh district, comparative research revealed that the infrastructure was superior in private schools (Baruah et al., 2022) in the form of libraries, computer laboratories, sports facilities and recreational areas, and other subject-specific educators. Toilets and drinking water were basic facilities necessary in government schools, which RTE required and schemes like Samagra Shiksha encouraged, but Government schools were behind in the enrichment of facilities like laboratories, libraries and co-curricular facilities. ([Positive Psychology Journal](#))

In Barak Valley, Choudhury (2023) noted that a large number of private schools (especially urban centres), had a more organized environment, and were teaching English and had better classroom amenities, but, in rural locations, government schools were commonly affected by issues of physical condition, overcrowding and broken-down buildings. ([Int. J. of Research in Academic World](#))

Simultaneously, according to ASER school observations, the access to basic infrastructure (drinking water, toilets of girls) in government schools in Assam is relatively high but not universal. ([ASER: Annual Status of Education Report](#)) Thus, government schools are gradually improving on core inputs, but private schools tend to lead on “value-added” facilities that shape parental perceptions of quality.

5.1.3 Teacher Availability and Classroom Processes:

Research carried out by Borah in Dhakuakhana subdivision reported that the private schools were usually better equipped in terms of the pupil-teacher ratio, teacher even attendance and even the use of English as a medium of instruction which led to improved academic performance. ([ilkogretim-online.org](#))

All-India ASER surveys show that attendance of teachers is generally good both in government and in private schools, but is a bit more in the case of a private institution. ([Rural India Online](#)) In the case of Assam, in ASER 2018-2022, teacher attendance in government schools ranged at about 85-90 and slightly increased over the years. ([ASER: Annual Status of Education Report](#))

In most of the rural government schools, teaching staffs are multi-grade and also do the administration, and this may water down classroom time. Smaller classes and "individual attention" are promoted by the private schools, but this is a highly diverse thing.

There are also differences in the instructional practices: the private schools might be more focused on the exam preparations and English proficiency, but the government schools are guided by the state board syllabi with the different level of pedagogical innovation. ([Positive Psychology Journal](#))

5.1.4 Learning Outcomes: Reading and Arithmetic:

The aspect of learning outcomes is also an important parameter when comparing government and private schooling in Assam, because it shows how effective is the classroom, the quality of teaching and home-learning assistance. The ASER tests present viable information on the level of the foundational reading and arithmetic and point out the differences in performances in different schools. Although in most cases, students in private schools tend to have higher average proficiency, particularly in English and mathematics, these variations are highly attributed to the socio-economic status, the availability of tutoring services and parental literacy other than the type of school.

ASER 2024 offers state-level information on the level of learning in Assam government schools. Table 2 indicates only the key indicators of the government school students.

Table 2. Selected Learning Indicators in Government Schools, Assam (ASER 2018–2024)

Learning Indicator	2018 (%)	2022 (%)	2024 (%)
Std III: % who can read at least Std II-level text	14.4	10.1	13.2
Std III: % who can do at least subtraction	23.4	15.8	22.3
Std V: % who can read Std II-level text	33.5	29.2	32.8
Std V: % who can do division	14.4	10.1	12.0
Std VIII: % who can read Std II-level text	58.1	63.6	61.0
Std VIII: % who can do division	28.1	21.7	24.2

Source: ASER 2024 – state table ([Scribd](#))

Such data indicate an ambivalent image:

- Reading and arithmetic skills in lower grades (Std III, V) are modestly low, although recovery is partially obtained in 2024 after a decline in 2022, probably due to COVID-19 interruptions.
- Reading and arithmetic in Std VIII are slightly higher, but arithmetic is still an issue.

The results of the national survey of ASER usually indicate that the children in private schools perform better in basic reading and calculations as compared to those in governmental schools.

(ASER: Annual Status of Education Report) There is no fully tabulated comparison in the public reports, but instead, available existing research and national trends indicate a similar discrepancy, with the students of private schools typically performing much better on average, in part because of selection biases.

5.2 Objective 2: Implications of Access, Equity and Socio-Economic Opportunity:

5.2.1 Government and Private School Attendees:

According to rural ASER data, a big proportion of children in the rural Assam almost 70% attend government schools, and the rest 28-30 attend private schools. ([Scribd](#)) The latter reports like Choudhury (2023) and Purkayastha (2025) make a point of saying that the concentration of the private schools is possible only in the urban centres and the relatively convenient towns, and remote villages, tea-garden lines, and char areas are heavily dependent on government schools. ([Int. J. of Research in Academic World](#))

Government schools have the disproportionate representation of children of economically weaker classes, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and most linguistic minorities. Individual schools usually attract children of the people with more stable incomes (employees of the government, salaried workers, business owners). ([ResearchGate](#))

Therefore, the type of school is closely related to the socio-economic background and therefore is a major transmitting factor in terms of reproduction of advantages and disadvantages.

5.2.2 Cost of Schooling and Hidden Burdens:

Government schools are theoretically free and they are provided with other benefits (mid-day meals, textbooks, uniforms). Fees in the private schools may be low to extremely high depending on the brand, location and facilities of the school. Besides, parents in private schools spend money on transportation, dress code, textbooks and in most cases tuition.

National annexures of ASER 2024 indicate that a large percentage of children at both government and non-government schools pay tuition, but in most states the percentage is less among the students of non-government schools. In poorer Assam households, the constant fee and other related expenses can be a significant burden; a lot can only afford low-fee private schools with minimal amenities which may not actually be significantly better than the government schools in the vicinity.

Many questions are created by this, whether privately schooling always provides the commensurable level of value in education and whether the fee system unwillingly disadvantages or imposes on poor families.

5.2.3 Equity and Stratification:

Mahanta and Gupta (2019) believed that dissimilar schools create dissimilar societies: as elite privately, owned schools offer superior education to privileged groups, and government schools are under-resourced, the whole trend strengthens the inequality. ([ResearchGate](#))

This issue has certain dimensions in Assam:

- The major channel through which the children of the tea-garden workers, small and marginal farmers, tribal communities among other marginalised communities can access education is via government schools.
- When such schools are not as good as the privates, then the students in such backgrounds could be at a structural disadvantage in the board exams, access to higher education and employment.
- On the other hand, empowering government schools can be an effective equaliser, as it has a wide coverage.

Most recent ASER 2024 results on national level shows that government schools performed well in recovering on foundational learning and in some instance by a greater margin than the privates, which has the potential to diminish the disparity. In Assam, should such tendencies be supported and maintained, the government schools would be the means of access as well as quality.

5.2.4 Perceptions, Language and Social Identity:

Qualitative accounts from Assam suggest that many middle-class families favour private schools due to the promise of English-medium instruction, stricter discipline and better exam coaching. ([Positive Psychology Journal](#)) Government schools, often Assamese or regional-language medium, may be perceived as less competitive, despite improvements and the introduction of English in upper classes.

This perception difference may add to symbolic stratification: schooling in privates becomes a connotation of social status, and government school is a connotation of poverty. Such symbolic separations may in the long run influence the self-esteem of children, peer groups, and dreams.

6. Major Findings:

Based on the secondary data and literature analysis, the results are the following key findings:

- i. In Assam, government schools continue to be the main providers of education with approximately 70% of the children in rural regions aged 6-14 enrolled as well as close to 100% enrolled in general. Whereas the number of private schools is on the increase, they serve approximately 28-30, mostly in urban and peri-urban locations. ([Scribd](#))
- ii. The infrastructure and extra facilities (libraries, computer labs, sports, co-curricular activities) of the private schools tend to be more powerful than of a lot of government schools, which have only basic infrastructures to meet the RTE norms. ([Positive Psychology Journal](#))
- iii. The teacher to student ratios and teacher attendance are inclined towards the private schools, however, the number of government teachers has increased and multi-grade teaching has been more prevalent in the rural government schools. ([ilkogretim-online.org](#))
- iv. The learning results are slight in both industries, and it is seen that the students of the private schools tend to have higher average results in basic reading and arithmetic, but the difference is due to socio-economic selection and access to other supporting means such as tuition. ([ilkogretim-online.org](#))

- v. Type of school is strongly correlated to socio-economic status, where government schools enroll the majority of children belonging to the poor, rural, tribal and tea-garden areas and the private schools were mostly enrolled by the affluent families. ([Int. J. of Research in Academic World](#))
- vi. The dual system also runs the risk of increasing educational inequality without the government schools being given an investment and reform initiative that is long term yet the privation schools keep growing.

7. Challenges and Opportunities:

7.1 Key Challenges:

- i. **Resource Lack in Government Schools:** Although there have been positive developments, a large number of government schools continue to suffer inadequate infrastructure, enriched learning facilities and lack of subject-specific teachers especially in remote rural school districts and some districts in Assam.
- ii. **Differences in Quality in the context of the Private Schools:** The context of the private school is highly heterogeneous; although some of them have great facilities and instruction, most of the low-price private schools may not bring any significant difference in achievements compared to government schools, and this raises the question of value and money and regulation. ([ijrcs.org](#))
- iii. **Limitations of Data and Transparency:** The complete data on enrolment, teacher qualification and learning outcomes of private schools in Assam are a significant issue as limited data on population or expenditure are disaggregated, preventing any systematic examination of the phenomenon.
- iv. **Socio-economic Stratification:** As the poorer children are enrolled in the government schools, and the more affluent are enrolled in the private schools, the disparity in quality can be converted into deep rooted social and economic disparities.

7.2 Opportunities:

- i. **Empowerment of Government Schools as Equalisers:** Government schools have enormous potential to equalise opportunity since most of the children in the country are enrolled in them provided that they are properly resourced and that efforts to equalise opportunity, such as NEP 2020, foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) missions, and high-quality teacher development are made. ([StudyIQ](#))
- ii. **Public-Private Cooperation:** Well-thought-out partnerships may help in exchanging of best practices, teacher training and resource provision within the sectors, as long as equity issues and accountability to the people are maintained.
- iii. **Better Governance of Private Schools:** Tightening the Belt on issues to do with fees, admissions, transparency and quality can make sure that private schools are playing a constructive role in the education ecosystem without taking advantage of families or causing standards to be lowered.
- iv. **Utilizing Data and Assessment:** ASER, UDISE+ and state assessment data could be frequently utilized to assist policymakers in identifying gaps and focusing more precisely on interventions to apply in both government and non-government schools.

8. Suggestions:

In the light of the above discussion, it is proposed to make the following recommendations:

1. Enhance Investment on Government Schools:

- Emphasise infrastructure development (libraries, labs, ICT, secure buildings) in rural and performing poorly in the Assam government schools.
- Ensure a proper teacher recruitment and assigning to minimize the multi-grade teaching and pupil-teacher ratio imbalance.

2. Concentrate on the Basic Education in the Two Sectors:

- Introduce intensive programmes with FLN at government schools, based on the ASER results and promote the use of evidence-based methods in the private schools as well. (ASER: Annual Status of Education Report)

3. Enhance Regulatory Control of Privately Schooling:

- Impose a transparent fee policy; prohibit predatory behaviour.
- Require minimum standards of facilities, teacher qualification and safety and undertake periodic quality audit.

4. Promote Learning across:

- Encourage forums in which the teachers in the government and in the private schools exchange pedagogical innovations, especially in multilingual and multi-grade classes.
- Promote the activities of the private schools to be supportive of the community activities, remedial learning camps and student mentoring programmes in government schools.

5. Improve Availability of Data and Research:

- Develop state-level systems to systematically gather and publish information on private schools (enrolment, infrastructure, teacher profile, learning outcomes).
- Promote more comparative studies at the district level in Assam to learn about local differences and practices.

6. Experience Social Identity Problems and Perception Problems:

- Carry out campaigns of success stories with the government schools to dispel deficit views.
- Offer English language and career advice in state schools in such a way that students have a competitive feeling with their counterparts in the privates' schools.

9. Conclusion:

A comparative analysis of the private and government schooling in Assam has shown a complicated complementary and inequality pattern. Government schools continue to be central to delivering almost universal access especially to children in poorer and disadvantaged communities and are improving in basic learning. In contrast, the resources are often better in the case of private schools, the class sizes are smaller and the perceived performance is also better but are available only to those families of the capable of paying the fees and other expenses involved. Unchecked, such inequalities threaten to deepen educational and social stratification, in which the kind of school that a child studies in becomes one of the proxies of the future opportunities of the child. The dilemma of the education policy of Assam then is not

to give the other sector a back seat ride but to bring the levels of quality in the government schools, to control and have the private schools play responsible roles, and both sectors to play a role in ensuring equitable and, high-quality education. Through making the best of both, and through making government education a high-quality choice that poor people use, as an option, instead of a last resort, Assam can get still closer to achieving the vision of education as a right and a capability of all of its children, regardless of their socio-economic status.

References:

1. Agarwal, P., & Sahoo, S. (2023). School feeding programmes and learning outcomes: A systematic review of evidence from India. *Journal of Education and Social Policy*, 10(1), 45–58.
2. Annual Status of Education Report (ASER). (2018). *Annual Status of Education Report (Rural) 2018*. ASER Centre. ([ASER: Annual Status of Education Report](#))
3. Annual Status of Education Report (ASER). (2022). *Annual Status of Education Report (Rural) 2022*. ASER Centre. ([ASER: Annual Status of Education Report](#))
4. Annual Status of Education Report (ASER). (2024). *Annual Status of Education Report 2024: India Rural and State Reports*. ASER Centre. ([Scribd](#))
5. Baruah, D., Konwar, B., Das, C., & Chakhap, C. (2022). Comparative analysis of government and private schools at elementary level: A study of Dibrugarh district of Assam. *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, 6(12), 2398–2405. ([Positive Psychology Journal](#))
6. Becker, G. S. (1993). *Human capital: A theoretical and empirical analysis* (3rd ed.). University of Chicago Press. ([ResearchGate](#))
7. Borah, J. (2023). Comparative study of government schools and private schools: A case of Dhakuakhana subdivision of Lakhimpur district, Assam. *Elementary Education Online*, 20(6), 2544–2551. ([ilkogretim-online.org](#))
8. Choudhury, J. I. (2023). A comparative analysis of government schools and private schools in Barak Valley: Quality, accessibility and socioeconomic implications. *International Journal of Research in Academic World*, 2(8), 218–222. ([Int. J. of Research in Academic World](#))
9. Das, S. (2023). Inequality in educational attainment: Urban–rural comparison in the Indian context. *arXiv preprint*. ([ijltemas.in](#))
10. Mahanta, R. P., & Gupta, S. (2019). Unequal schools as source of unequal society: A comparative study of government and private higher secondary schools in Guwahati city of Assam. *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*, 6(3), 465–472. ([ResearchGate](#))
11. Mukhopadhyay, R., & Srivastava, R. (2020). Nutrition, schooling and child well-being: Lessons from mid-day meals in India. *Economic & Political Weekly*, 55(38), 54–62. ([ResearchGate](#))
12. Purkayastha, J. D. (2025). Trends of education and health gaps in the Barak Valley of Assam. *International Journal of Social Science Research*, 2(2), 45–60. ([ijssr.com](#))
13. Sentinel Digital Desk. (2023, January 18). School education scenario in Assam moderate: Report. *The Sentinel Assam*. ([The Sentinel](#))
14. Sen, A. (1999). *Development as freedom*. Oxford University Press. ([ResearchGate](#))

15. UDISE+. (2024). *Unified District Information System for Education Plus: 2023–24 data tables*. Ministry of Education, Government of India. (Used for background on enrolment and school characteristics). ([ASER: Annual Status of Education Report](#))
16. Guwahati Plus. (2025, January 31). Assam sees improvement in basic reading & arithmetic skills: ASER report. *Guwahati Plus*. ([guwahatiplus.com](#))
17. Economic Times. (2025, January 29). ASER 2024 report shows remarkable recovery in learning levels in govt schools. *The Economic Times*. ([The Economic Times](#))